

The Categories of Entry

The student filmmakers may produce films in one of three categories. First, Second, and Third Place prizes will be awarded in each of the three categories. Films can be no longer than five minutes. For a complete set of rules regarding the production of the films, consult the Entry Form. The categories are:

Documentary/Personal Essay

This category covers any traditionally structured nonfiction works, which could be fly-on-the-wall documentaries (ex. *Salesman*), “exposé”-style or informative documentaries (ex. *Bowling for Columbine*), or first-person documentaries, in which the filmmaker plays some role in the film (ex. *Super Size Me*). “Personal Essay” films tell the filmmaker’s story, revealing something about his/her life or point-of-view (ex. *Sherman’s March*, *Fired!*, *Roger and Me*).

Fiction/Narrative

This category encompasses any traditionally shot and structured narrative film. The film generally will involve a script and actors, and tell a clear, complete story (with a beginning, middle, and an end) in its short running time.

Music Video/Experimental

This category covers music videos (these could be performance- or narrative-based) in which the soundtrack is composed entirely of a prerecorded song. Filmmakers are advised that if they choose to shoot a music video, they will need a signed letter from the song’s copyright-holder granting the rights to use the song in the production (see the Entry Form for more on this). Experimental films are avant-garde works, artistic and daring by nature, usually devoid of narrative. Experimental films are audacious and expressive in their use of interesting visuals and soundtracks.